(iv) *Collection of Toll Charges:*

As explained by the Hon'ble Minister, the possibility of reviewing the quantum of toll be collected should be examined in detail. This will be done by a Committee after collection of required details from all concerned.

(v) *fixation of Minimum Freight Rates:*

A explained by the Hon'ble Minister, under the Motor Vehicles Act, these powers are with the State Governments. However, keeping in view the strong demand of the All India Motor Transport Congress (AIMTC), the Hon'ble Minister has agreed to request the various States to initiate necessary steps for fixing minimum freight rates for transportation of goods and finalise this preferably within 30 days.

(vi) *Reduction in the Quantum of Permit Fee:*

As explained by the Hon'ble Minister, according to the Motor Vehicles Act, the quantum of permit fee is determined by the respective State Governments. Considering repeated requests of the AIMTC, the Hon'ble Minister has agreed to include this item in the agenda for the next Transport Development Council (TDC) meeting.

Restoration of Paradip Port

743. SHRI VEDPRAKASH P. GOYAL: Will the Minister of SURFACE TRANSPORT be pleased to state:

(a) the contents of the detailed report on the damage caused by the cyclone to the Paradip Port by the high powered task force on Orissa by this Ministry;

(b) the estimated amount of damage to the port;

(c) what action has been taken so far on the said report; and

(d) what steps are planned in the short and long run to restore normalcy there?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF SURFACE TRANSPORT (DR. DEBENDRA PRADHAN): (a) and (b) No High Powered Task Force on the issue has been set up by

this Ministry. However, the extent of damages has been estimated by the Paradip Port authorities which is Rs. 68.5 crores for the Port and another Rs. 9.5 crores to the fishery harbour functioning in the Paradip Port area.

(c) and (d) A three phase recovery plan has been made. Firs? two phases have been completed and normalcy has been restored. Port has started functioning since 5.11.1999. All equipments started working since 1.12.1999. The third phase which consists of full repair and reconstruction of damaged buildings and structures is under progress.

Repair of NH-5

744. SHRI BHAGABAN MAJHI: Will the Minister of SURFACE TRANSPORT be pleased to state:

(a) the total amount spent on the maintenance of National Highways during the last three years;

(b) whether the cyclone has caused expensive damage to National Highway No. 5; and

(c) if so, the steps taken for the reconstruction and repairing of that NH Road; and

(d) the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF SURFACE TRANSPORT (DR. DEBENDRA PRADHAN): (a) Rs. 1419.30 crores.

(b) Yes, Sir.

(c) and (c) Immediate temporary restoration works to the damaged reaches of NH-5 in Orissa and Andhra Pradesh has taken up to restore flow of traffic.

Cyclonic heavy rain on 16th & 17th October, 1999, caused potholes, eroded berms surface damages and falling of big trees of NH-5 in Srikulam District in Andhra Pradesh. These were cleared immediately and traffic allowed. In Orissa portion of NH-5 between km 233 to km 350, road was overtopped by flowing water and blocked at few locations. These were cleared and traffic was restored.